ROITMAN
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Aaron

ROITMAN, Aaron H.

February 18, 1995. Residence 310 Grotto Ave., Providence. Beloved Husband of the late Rose (Miller) Roitman. Devoted Father of James Roitman of Berkley, CA, Barbara L. Holt of Scarsdale, NY and Deborah A. Venator of Foster, RI. Loving Grandfather of Thomas Roitman and Alexander and Nicholas Holt. Funeral Services Wednesday at 11 a.m. at TEMPLE BETH-EL, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. In lieu of flowers contributions in his memory may be made to the Narragansett Council of the Boy Scouts of America, 175 Broad St., Providence, RI 02903 or the Aaron Roitman Music Fund, c/o R.I. Foundation, 70 Elm St., Providence, RI 02903. Shiva will be observed at his late residence Wednesday 7-9 and Thursday 2-4, 7-9 p.m. Arrangements by the MAX SUGARMAN MEMORIAL CHAPEL, 458 Hope St., (corner of Doyle Ave.).

Aaron H. Roitman, 85; a leader in retailing, community affairs

By LEE DYKAS
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — Aaron H. Roitman, 85, whose furniture store on South Main Street was a Rhode Island institution for decades, died Saturday at the Tucson Medical Center in Tucson, Ariz., where he had been vacationing.



Mr. Roitman, who lived at 310 Grotto Ave., was the husband of the late Rose (Miller) Roitman.

Born in Cambridge, Mass., he was a son of the late Barnet and Kate (Sansiper) Roitman.

After graduating cum laude from Brown University in 1930, Mr. Roitman joined the wholesale furniture business that his father, a Russian immigrant, had started in 1916.

The Hurricane of 1938 nearly wiped out the business, then situated at Custom and Dyer Streets, but instead it was moved to 161 S. Main St., where it thrived on the sale of elegant furniture and design services.

In 1990, however, faced with escalating costs, Mr. Roitman chose to close the business rather than to sell it or switch to selling cheaper high-volume furniture. "I'm not going to sell my name," he said, "I got my good name from my father, and I want to pass it along to my kids."

Mr. Roitman was the founder and honorary chairman of Chamber Music United in Rhode Island, and in recent years was considered the "patriarch of chamber music in Rhode Island."

Scouting was also close to his heart — he was one of the original members of Troop 10, Temple Beth Israel. He served for many years as president of the Narragansett Council of the Boy Scouts, and in the 1950s led a campaign to raise $500,000 for the construction of the council's headquarters at 175 Broad St. The council honored him with its Silver Beaver Award, and the New England Region of the Boy Scouts presented him its Silver Antelope Award.

At the outbreak of World War II, Mr. Roitman volunteered to serve in the Navy, and was commissioned a lieutenant. He served as navigator on the attack transport Clermont, in the Pacific.

Mr. Roitman was a leader of the 1967 Italian Festival in Rhode Island, and for his efforts was awarded the rank of Cavalieri in the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy.

From 1972 to 1984, Mr. Roitman was honorary consul of Denmark in Rhode Island, but said once that the job entalied little more than occasionally renewing passports for Danish vistors.

For his efforts on behalf of the Danish furniture industry, Queen Margarethe of Denmark awarded Mr. Roitman a knighthood in the Royal Order of Danneburg in 1984.

In 1979, Rhode Island College awarded him an honorary doctor of public service degree, and a year later, he was chief marshal of the academic procession at Brown University.

Mr. Roitman was a member of the executive board of the General Jewish Committee, predecessor of the R.I. Jewish Federation, and was chairman of the federation's first Committee on the Aged. In 1963, the Jewish War Veterans presented him its annual Brotherhood Award.

Mr. Roitman was a former president of the National Wholesale Furniture Association, and was a member of the Providence Historic District Commission, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Learning in New England and the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce. He was a member of the board of directors of the Rhode Island Foundation and of Roger Williams Hospital.

He was a member of Temple Beth-El, and a former member of Roosevelt Masonic Lodge No. 42, the R.I. Yacht Club, the University Club and the Turks Head Club.

He leaves a son, James Roitman of Berkeley, Calif; two daughters, Barbara Holt of Scarsdale, N.Y., and Deborah Venator of Foster, and three grandsons.

The funeral will be held Wednesday at 11 a.m. in Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave. Burial will be in Sons of Israel & David Cemetery.

Obituaries

ROITMAN, Aaron

Aaron Roitman, 85, businessman active in Boy Scouts, other groups

Aaron H. Roitman of Providence, a retired businessman who for decades gave his time generously to numerous civic organizations, died Saturday at the Tucson Medical Center in Arizona, where he had been vactioning. He was 85.

Born in Cambridge, he graduated cum laude from Brown University in 1930, and went to work for Roitman & Son, his father's wholesale furniture store business. He eventually became owner of the company and ran it until its closing in 1990.

Mr. Roitman was involved in the Boy Scouts of America, beginning in the 1920s. In 1956 he was chairman of the "together plan," which resulted in the formation of 50 new scout units. From 1956 to 1958 he was chairman of the group's Golden Jubilee campaign and in the early 1960s, he served as president of the Narragansett Council.

During World War II, Mr. Roitman served as a lieutenant with the Navy in the Pacific theater from 1942 to 1945.

He was on the executive board of the General Jewish Committee, the predecessor group to the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. He also was chairman of the federation's first committee on the aged.

Mr. Roitman was a former president of the National Furniture Association.

He also served as a trustee or director of several other organizations: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, the Peoples Bank, the Rhode Island College Foundation and Roger Williams Hospital. He was a member of the Providence Historic District Commission.

Mr. Roitman received the annual Brotherhood Award of the Jewish War Veterans in 1963. In 1967, he was awarded the rank of Cavalieri in the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy.

From 1972 to 1984, he was honorary Danish consul in Rhode Island, and was awarded knighthood by Queen Margarethe of Denmark in the Royal Order of Dannebrog. In 1979, Rhode Island College awarded him an honorary doctorate in recognition of his public service.

A member of the Temple Beth-El in Providence, Mr. Roitman was a past master of Roosevelt Masonic Lodge and a former member of the Rhode Island Yacht Club, the University Club and the Turks Head Club, all in Rhode Island.

He leaves a son, James of Berkeley, Calif., two daughters, Barbara Holt of Scarsdale, N.Y., and Deborah Venator of Foster, R.I.; and three grandsons.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow at Temple Beth-El in Providence at 11 a.m. Burial will be at Sons of Israel and David Cemetery in Providence.

ROITMAN
AARON

Obituaries

Aaron Hyman Roitman '30, Providence; Feb. 18. After graduating he joined the wholesale furniture business started by his father in 1916. The Hurricane of 1938 nearly wiped out the business, but Mr. Roitman moved the store to South Main Street and it became a Rhode Island institution, until it closed in 1990. Founder and honorary chairman of Chamber Music United of Rhode Island, he was considered the patriarch of chamber music in the state. He was one of the original members of Boy Scout Troop 10, Temple Beth Israel, and served for many years as president of the Narragansett Council of Boy Scouts. In the 1950s Mr. Roitman led the campaign to raise money for the construction of the council's headquarters on Broad Street. The council honored him with the Silver Beaver Award, and the New England Region of the Boy Scouts presented him the Silver Antelope Award. From 1972 to 1984 he was honorary consul of Denmark in Rhode Island, and for his efforts on behalf of the Danish furniture industry he was awarded knighthood in the Royal Order of Danneburg in 1984. In 1979 Rhode Island College awarded Mr. Roitman an honorary doctor of public service degree, and in 1980 he was Commencement grand marshal at Brown. He was a member of the executive board of the General Jewish Committee (predecessor of the R.I. Jewish Federation) and was chairman of the federation's first Committee on the Aged. He was former president of the National Wholesale Furniture Association, a member of the Providence Historic District Commission, the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, and the board of directors of the Rhode Island Foundation and of Roger Williams Hospital. Mr. Roitman was commissioned a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during World War II and served as navigator on the attack transport *Clermont* in the Pacific. He is survived by a son, **James Roitman** '63; and two daughters: **Barbara Roitman Holt** '67 and **Deborah Roitman Venator** '70, Jencks Rd., Foster, R.I. 02825.

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